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**Q.** *Please explain who the committee of 40 are. I know they are the men in charge of all secret U.S. operations.—Lily Maceda, Warwick, N.Y.*

**A.** The 40 Committee, which derives its name from National Security Council Intelligence Decision Memorandum No. 40, has the responsibility of approving in advance all CIA covert operations. The 40 committee consists of five men. The chairman of the committee is Secretary of State Henry Kissinger; the four other members are: Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs Joseph J. Sisco; Deputy Secretary of Defense William P. Clements; Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. George S. Brown and Director of the CIA William Colby. The 40 Committee acts in great secrecy apparently above and beyond the control of House and Senate subcommittees charged with monitoring the activities of the CIA and the intelligence community.